

EASTERN MARKET METRO STATION
(Reservation Nos. 44, 44A, 45,
46, 47, 47A, 47B, 48, 49)
South Carolina and Pennsylvania
avenues and 7th, 8th, and D streets, SE
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS NO. DC-670

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
EASTERN MARKET METRO STATION
(Reservation Numbers 44, 44A, 45, 46, 47, 47A, 47B, 48, 49)

HABS No. DC-670

Location: South Carolina and Pennsylvania avenues and Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and D streets, SE.

Owner/Manager: U.S. government, National Park Service.

Present Use: Metrorail Station, Sitting park.

Significance: Indicated as an open space on both the L'Enfant and Ellicott plans, this space has been treated as an open landscaped area since its first improvement in the 1880s. It is also within boundaries of the National Register Capitol Hill Historic District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of plan: 1791, L'Enfant Plan; 1792, Ellicott Plan.
2. Original and subsequent owners: It was formerly part of a tract of land known as Houp's Addition, owned by Jonathan Slater since 1764 and purchased by William Prout in 1791.¹
3. First Improvement: Six triangles were improved as sodded parks in the 1880s.
4. Alterations and additions:
 - 1903: Median strips Nos. 44A and 47A transferred from the District Commissioners to the OPB&G.
 - 1969: South Carolina Avenue closed through the park.
 - 1970s: Metrorail Station constructed within Reservation Nos. 44 and 45.

B. Historical Context:

Both Pierre L'Enfant and Andrew Ellicott left a large open space at the intersection of Pennsylvania and South Carolina avenues. Technically located within the rights-of-way of the avenues and surrounding streets, the land in this reservation was acquired by the federal government along with that designated for streets and avenues according to the agreement signed by the original proprietors on March 30, 1791. It was formerly part of a tract of land known as Houp's Addition, owned by Jonathan Slater since 1764 and purchased by William Prout in 1791.²

¹ McNeil, 43, 48.

² McNeil, 43, 48.

The area around this intersection was moderately populated by the middle of the nineteenth century since the U.S. Marine Barracks were located two blocks to the south. It was also located on the well-travelled route leading from the northwestern reaches of the city to the ferry that crossed over the Anacostia River into Maryland at the base of Pennsylvania Avenue. One of the earlier structures in the vicinity of the reservation was Tunnickliff's Tavern, also known as the Eastern Branch Hotel, built by William Tunnickliff in 1795 on the southeast side of the reservation at Ninth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.³ Originally built to serve ferry passengers, after 1821 the hotel was used as a residence, and its gardens encompassed the entire square.⁴

Up to the Civil War, the area remained fairly undeveloped. According to the Boschke map compiled between 1857-61, only five or so buildings faced onto the open space. During the war the population in Washington doubled, and toward the end of the conflict one of the lots facing onto the square at Pennsylvania Avenue and Seventh Street was selected as the site of the first modern public school in Washington. Named after former Washington mayor Richard Wallach Jr., the brick Romanesque-Revival school was completed in 1864 on the northwest side of the space.

The first official recognition of the open space at the center of the intersection as federal property was in a list of federal properties published in an annual report of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPB&G) in 1872. Since 1867, the OPB&G had been assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers who oversaw the improvement of the federal property in the city. On the list, the space was indicated as a reservation of more than 2 acres. It was probably after the land was identified as public property that the District Commissioners began using portions of the open space to store equipment and supplies.⁵

A map published in 1872 by the OPB&G showed a green shaded rectangle in the center of the large intersection, perhaps indicating that the open space was intended for a large rectangular park, such as those already designed at Lafayette and Lincoln squares. The obstacle to creating a rectangular park at this intersection, however, was that streetcar lines, already laid within the intersection, ran along Pennsylvania Avenue between Seventh and Eighth Street and turned south in the center of the space, to continue down Eighth Street to the U.S Marine Barracks and Navy Yard.

A real estate book published in 1876 reveals that this space was no longer conceived as a large rectangle but as six triangular pieces divided by the two intersecting avenues and Eighth Street. Over the next decade, these six triangles, numbered in 1884 as Reservation Nos. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, and 49, were improved as attractive yet simple parks. The first to be improved were Reservation Nos. 48 and 49 which were graded, sodded, and irrigated in 1886.⁶ The OPB&G annual report of 1887 included the following description of improvements made to one of the other parks at the intersection, although the specific parcel was not indicated:

³ Fryer and Hogan.

⁴ Goode, 162-63.

⁵ Annual Report . . ., 1886, 2079.

⁶ Annual Report . . ., 1886, 2079.

The reservation at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and South Carolina Avenue east contains an area of 13,523 square feet; previous to its improvement it was used as a dumping ground for refuse; it was properly graded, surface coated with good soil, edges sodded, and lawn sown down with grass seed; a handsome flower bed was planted.⁷

By 1894, all six reservations were enclosed with cast-iron post-and-chain or post-and-pipe fences and planted with trees and shrubs, with the exception of Reservation No. 47 in the southeast corner which remained unimproved until 1903. Also in 1903, the parcels of land upon which the streetcar tracks were laid were officially transferred from the District of Columbia to the OPB&G, and they were assigned numbers consistent with the system used throughout the rest of the city. The median between Seventh and Eighth streets became Reservation No. 44A due to its proximity to Reservation No. 44 and the median between Eighth and Ninth streets was designated as Reservation No. 47A. Reservation No. 44A included trolley tracks and a waiting area for the line that went from Georgetown, down Pennsylvania Avenue to this intersection where it turned on Eighth Street and continued to the U. S. Navy Yard. Both were sodded and planted with a row of trees.

Many of the buildings erected around the square during the time of its first improvements remain in place today. Tunnicliff's Tavern, however, was demolished in 1931 even though it was thought at the time to be the oldest building on Capitol Hill. Up to the time it was razed, the old tavern was being used as a gas station.⁸ The Wallach School was demolished in 1950 to be replaced by the Hines Junior High School. The streetcar tracks were removed from the center median in the late 1950s when public transportation in the city converted completely to busses.

In the 1970s, continuing problems with traffic congestion promoted the construction of an underground rapid-transit system. The subway was designed roughly along the lines of the former streetcar system along Pennsylvania Avenue, and a station was planned underneath this intersection with South Carolina Avenue. An entry was installed in Reservation Nos. 44 and 45, which were merged when the portion of South Carolina Avenue that crossed through the space was closed off in 1969. Reservation Nos. 48 and 49 were also merged into a large trapezoid in 1969 and were likewise redesigned to create a unified whole. Since the square formally had no name, the Metrorail station built beneath the intersection was named after Eastern Market, a landmark one block to the north at Seventh and C streets that has served as a community market since 1873.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. Overall dimensions: Reservation No. 44 is 0.38 acres; Reservation Nos. 44A, 45, and 47A are 0.30 acres each; Reservation No. 46 is approximately 1,100 square feet; Reservation No 47 is approximately 850 square feet; Reservation No. 48 is

⁷ Annual Report . . ., 1887, 2575.

⁸ Goode, 162-63.

0.25 acres; and Reservation No. 49 is 0.38 acres.⁹

B. Materials:

1. **Perimeter sidewalks:** Concrete paver sidewalks abut Pennsylvania Avenue and Eighth Street in Reservation Nos. 44/45 and 48/49. The sidewalks along D, Seventh, and Ninth streets are brick. Both medians 44A and 47A have brick walks at both ends for pedestrian access to the sidewalks on Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth streets. Reservation Nos. 46 and 47 are entirely brick with no perimeter walks delineated. All perimeter sidewalks feature square tree openings adjacent to the street.
2. **Interior pathways, paving:** Both Reservation Nos. 44/45 and 48/49 feature large areas paved in brick. Concrete pavers cover the area at the subway entrance in Reservation No. 44/45. A brick path in Reservation No. 44/45 leads from the corner of Eighth and D streets to the central paved area. Several dirt paths have been worn by pedestrians through median strip 47A and another leads from a bench area in Reservation No. 44/45 to the sidewalk along Seventh Street.
3. **Vegetation:**
 - a. **Grass:** Reservation Nos. 44/45 and 48/49 feature two large, amorphous sodded areas as well as small circular sodded beds. The median strips 44A and 47A are sodded along Pennsylvania Avenue, as is the southeast half of Reservation No. 44A. Reservation No. 47 has sodded strips along Pennsylvania Avenue and D Street.
 - b. **Trees, shrubs, hedges:** In addition to the trees along the perimeter walks, Reservation Nos. 44/45 and 48/49 feature shade trees in the two sodded areas and smaller ornamental trees behind the benches arranged around the sides of the central paved areas. They both also have a round shrub bed; in Reservation No. 44/45 in the southwest corner and in Reservation No. 48/49 in the northeast corner. Reservation No. 46 also features four tree grates along Eighth Street which do not have trees growing in them. One small tree stands in the center of Reservation No. 47. The median strips feature rectangular shrub masses along the center, and median strip 44A has a double row of trees in the southeast half.
 - c. **Flowers, seasonal plantings:** Reservation Nos. 44/45 and 47/48 both feature large central circular flower beds.
4. **Structures:**
 - a. **Retaining walls:** An approximately 4'-tall wall surrounds the Metro escalator area in Reservation No. 44/45.

⁹ Dimensions are from a 1966 survey made before the merging of Reservation Nos. 44 and 46 and 48 and 49.

- b. Benches: Reservation No. 44/45 contains ten benches; four northwest of the central flower bed abutting a large sodded area southeast of the central paved area along the edge of the other large sodded area. The twelve benches in Reservation No. 47/48 are arranged similarly; four along the large sodded area to the north, six surrounding the central flower bed and two along the perimeter walk on Eighth Street. All are backless concrete-support wood-slat benches.
- c. Lighting: There are no interior lamps in the park although street lamps line the perimeter walks. They are all highway lamps, except for a lone Washington Globe standard on the north side of Reservation No. 47/48.
- d. Metro: The Eastern Market Metro station runs under the parks, and Reservation No. 44/45 is the site of both the elevator and escalator accesses. The rectangular elevator shaft stands in the northwest corner of the reservation, and the escalators are located near the corner of to the northwest along Pennsylvania Avenue side.
- e. Bus shelters: There are two bus shelters in Reservation No. 47/48; one along Eighth Street and the other on Pennsylvania Avenue. Reservation No. 44/45 also has a bus shelter on Pennsylvania Avenue.

C. Site:

- 1. Character of surrounding structures: The park is surrounded by three- and four-story attached commercial, office, and residential structures. Hines Junior High School stands on the northwest side of the square.
- 2. Traffic patterns: Three lanes each of northbound and southbound traffic along Pennsylvania Avenue run through the square divided by a median strip. Four-lane Eighth Street runs through the park north to south.
- 3. Vistas: From any point on either median strip, the U.S. Capitol dome is visible to the northwest.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Maps:

Boschke, A. "Topographical Map of the District of Columbia surveyed in the years '57, '58, and '59."

District of Columbia Board of Public Works. "Exhibit Chart of Improved Streets and Avenues." 1872.

Ellicott, Andrew. "Plan of the City of Washington." 1792.

Fryer, Thelma E. F. and Jeanne M. Hogan. "Historical Map of Washington,

depicting events, sites and place names of interest from 1790 to 1900.
1940.

L'Enfant, Pierre Charles. "Plan of the City of Washington." 1791.

Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. "Plan of the City of Washington, District of Columbia, showing the Public Reservations." Prepared by Orville E. Babcock. 1871.

Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. "Map of the City of Washington showing the Public Reservations Under Control of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds." 1884, 1887, and 1894.

- B. Park plans: See Supplemental Information below for a list of attached plans. Additional plans are located at the Office of Land Use, National Capital Region.

- C. Early Views:

1927: Survey photographs of each reservation (NPS Reservation Files).

- D. Bibliography:

Annual Reports of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. Annual Reports of the Chief of Engineers. 1867-1933.

Goode, James. Capital Losses. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979.

"Government Reservations in the City Boundaries." City Lots. Real Estate Atlas (NARA RG42.)

McNeil, Priscilla W. "Rock Creek Hundred: Land Conveyed for the Federal City." Washington History 3 (Spring/Summer, 1991): 34-51.

Record Group 42. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA RG42).

Reservation files. National Capital Region. Office of Land Use.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Barthold
Project Historian
National Park Service
1993

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

The Plan of Washington, D.C., project was carried out from 1990-93 by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) Division, Robert J. Kapsch, chief. The project sponsors were the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Inc. of Washington, D.C.; the Historic Preservation Division, District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, which provided Historic Preservation Fund monies; the National Capital Region and its White House Liaison office, NPS; and the National

Park Foundation Inc.

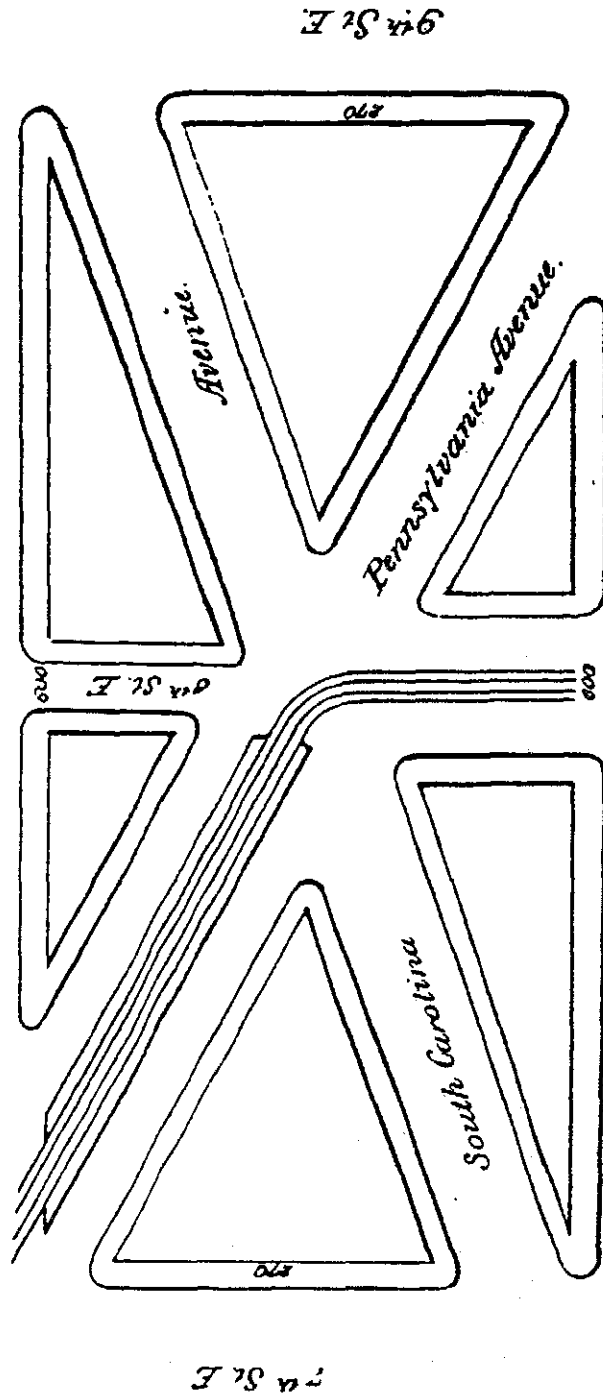
HABS historian Sara Amy Leach was the project leader and Elizabeth J. Barthold was project historian. Architectural delineators were: Robert Arzola, HABS; Julianne Jorgensen, University of Maryland; Robert Juskevich, Catholic University of America; Sandra M. E. Leiva, US/ICOMOS-Argentina; and Tomasz Zweich, US/ICOMOS-Poland, Board of Historical Gardens and Palace Conservation. Katherine Grandine served as a data collector. The photographs are by John McWilliams, Atlanta, except for the aerial views, which are by Jack E. Boucher, HABS, courtesy of the U.S. Park Police - Aviation Division.

PART V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Page 8	1876:	Plat of parks (<u>City Lots</u> , NARA RG42).
Page 9	1888:	Plans of reservations showing locations and some dimensions. (NARA RG42 30.0-44).
Page 10, 11	ca. 1976:	Ground plans of WMATA redesign (NCR 840/80009 WMATA DGL-LA-10 M216-15).

13.

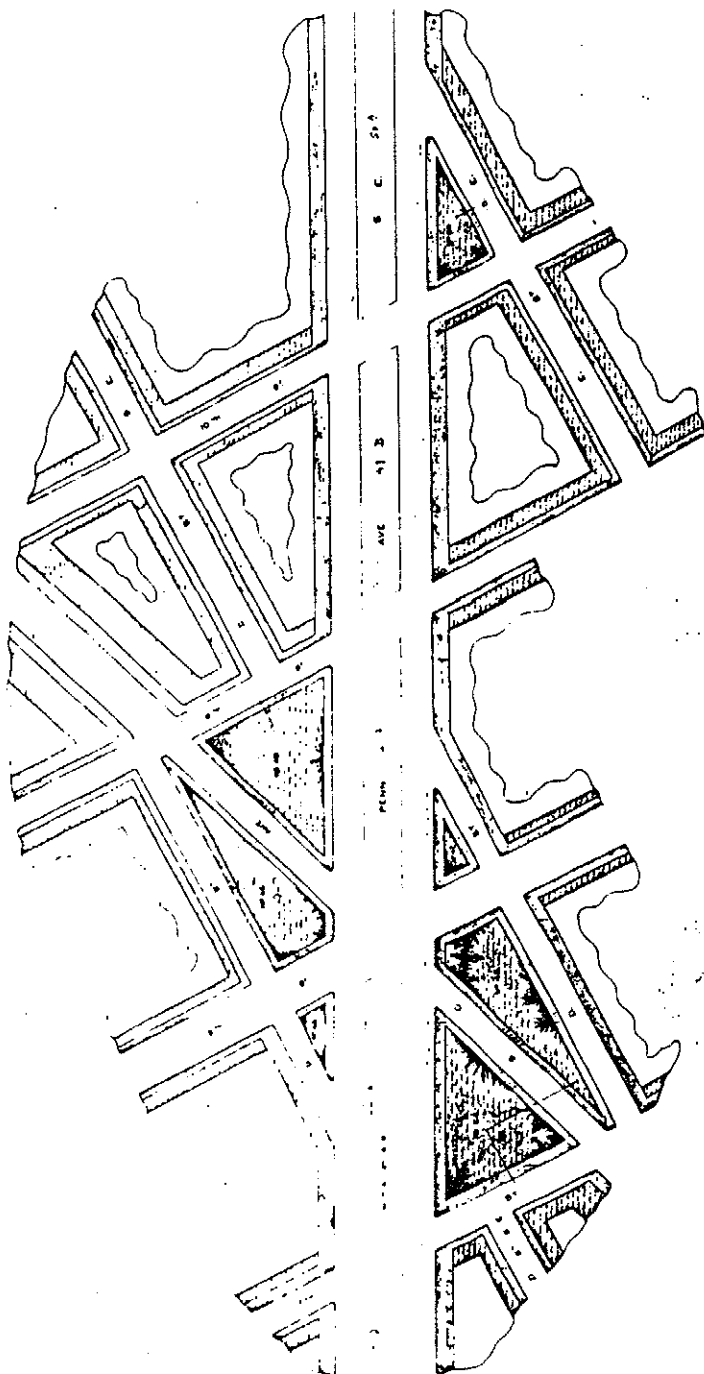
SOUTH CAROLINA & PENNSYLVANIA AVENUES CROSSING.



Eastern Market Metro Station
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NOTE: This drawing is a reproduction of the original drawing and is not to be used for construction purposes.

RESERVATIONS.



Explanation

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